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A History
OF THE
Congregation
IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS
Jubilee

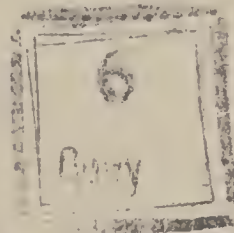
BY ABRAM SIMON
RABBI OF THE
WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION

1905

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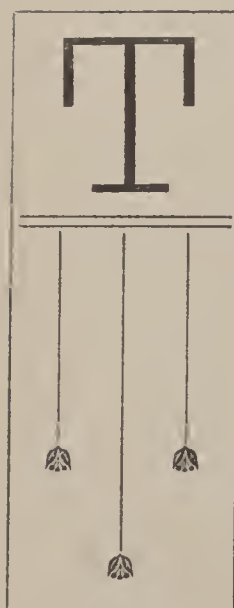
<p><i>RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED</i></p> <p><i>TO ALL</i></p> <p><i>WHO HAVE HELPED TO</i></p> <p><i>FOUND, FOSTER AND FURTHER</i></p> <p><i>THE INTERESTS AND THE AIMS</i></p> <p><i>OF THE</i></p> <p><i>WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION,</i></p> <p><i>THE AUTHOR.</i></p>		

P R E F A C E

OWING to the absence of the first records of the congregation, the writer has been compelled to resort to the helpful assistance of Messrs. Joseph Friedenwald, Levy Bar, Elias Kaufman and Isaac Strouse of Baltimore, Sam Samstag of New York, Ben Kaufman of Boston, and S. Heller, Henry Strassburger and S. Herman of our city. In certain instances where memories crossed each other, he has resorted to the more likely and probable date or fact or theory. To all of these gentlemen and also to Bachrach & Bro., Joseph Abel and Dr. G. W. Walter, the writer is very grateful for their generous assistance.

A History of the Washington Hebrew Congregation.

Five decades flown, since Faith had firmly wold'
In God's fierce forge of flaming duty,
A link in Israel's chain of noble Eld'
And gilds it now with higher Beauty.



THE history of the "Pioneer as Hero" falls to the lot of him who is willing and courageous enough to complete the inspiring series of biographical studies of Thomas Carlyle. The pioneer represents the sturdy type of progressive movement, content with little, suffering privation, glowing with ideals, trustful of the future's fruition of his early planting. There is no grander page in Life's volume than the one recording the "Day of small beginnings" in religion, discovery, art and politics. The pioneer embodies, thus, the essentially heroic.

Recognition of our obligations to this advance-guard and of our desire to give them their proper niche in the Temple of worthy Endeavor is in itself a profound and solemn duty. It is a great thing to have a past. To attempt to break the thread of continuity is cowardly and foolish. Tradition is the well-spring of patriotism, enthusiasm and social motion. To know the strands that bind us to the labors of the past is desirable historically, intellectually and, above all, morally.

This is a Jubilee year. It is the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the re-admission of the Jew into England and of his coming to America. It is refreshing in the dreary days of bleak November to recall the early blossoms of Spring. This sentiment inherent in human nature is basic to all celebrations of a commemorative character. Pride, gratitude and the consciousness of higher obligation rise to the surface to be embodied into action. Worthy fathers have a right to expect worthier sons. Our prosperity must not dull the keen edge of appreciation. This idea is pivotal to our Congregation's Jubilee.



SAM HERMAN.



S. HELLER.

I.

Three years and five decades have rolled by in accumulative blessedness since a choice band of heroic and self-denying individuals formed the first Jewish institution in this District. The exact date of the arrival of the first of Israel's children hither is unknown, but that a fairly strong colony of Jews lived here as early as 1847, mostly young men clerking in stores and going to Baltimore for the main holiday services, is a fact. Directories antecedent to this date contain a number of names that are suggestively Jewish but whose classification as such, because of their Germanic sound, would be very hazardous. Although it is fifty years since the congregation secured its charter, yet the Washington Hebrew Congregation was organized in 1852. A hardy band of young and spirited pioneers, poor in the world's goods, but rich in the pride of their religious heritage and anxious to maintain the rites of their faith, met on April 25th, in the home of W. Jacobi, on the Avenue, between 19th and 20th Streets. An organization was effected with the following chosen officers and membership; President, Solomon Pribram; Vice-President,

Jacob Saqui; Treasurer, Jonas Gluck; Secretary, Albert Horwitz, together with Leopold Oppenheimer, Moritz Fischer, Herman Lissberger, Levy Whetfield, Moses May, Leopold Gassenheimer, W. Jacobi, Feist Hanlein, Sam Wallach, A. Bernstein, Sam Bien, Moses Friedenwald, Henry Lauchheimer, L. Cohen, Joseph Friedenwald, Abraham Strassburger and N. A. Schloss. These represented the Washington and Georgetown residents. A Sepher Torah was borrowed from Mr. N. A. Schloss of Georgetown, who is recalled in Dr. Rosenau's Congregational History of Oheb Shalom, page 12, as having done the same to the latter in 1850. For about two years, from 1852 to 1854, they held their services first in the homes of H. Lissberger and M. Lully, then over the home of L. Cohen, corner H and the Avenue, between 18th and 19th Streets, then moved to a rented room on Four-and-a-half Street and Maryland Avenue. S. W., then to Seventh Street near D. Members of the congregation like Lissberger and Jacobi took charge of the services; and a little later than this period Mr. Bloch and Mr. Jacobi acted as Readers. In 1854, Mr. Sam Herman, still very active and

hearty, came from Baltimore and was the first officially elected Chazan, serving also in the capacity of Secretary for one year. During his year the services were held in the home of the President, Isaac Herzberg, on the Avenue, between Third and Four-and-a-half Streets.

The month of December marked the red-letter day in the history of the Congregation. While in nearly every Eastern State, the contest for absolute religious and civil freedom and for the rights of the Jew were bitterly contested and in some States only but recently, as it were, granted, the Jew in this District had no struggle. The absence of the Jew created no issues. The coming of the Jew into a community has already brought new problems there for solution. When the handful of sturdy pioneers thought of securing a Charter, they found the doors against them, only by implication. The privileges for holding services and maintaining religious institutions were construed Christianwise, yet with no persecuting or restricting intent. Thus, special efforts were required to secure a congregational Charter, and that too, from Congress in a bill signed by the President of the United States.

The little congregation was eminently grateful to Captain Jonas P. Levy for this successful privilege. It ought to be added that Captain Levy has had a fine record long before this year of 1855 for loyalty to the cause of Israel and for insistence upon the equal rights of all Jewish-Americans with their non-Jewish fellow-citizens. Thus, in the twelfth volume of the Jewish Encyclopedia, in the article on "Jews in the United States," Captain Levy's heroic and patriotic service is dwelt upon.

CHARTER.

THIRTY-FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, at the first session, begun and held at the City of Washington, in the District of Columbia, on Monday, the 3rd day of December, 1855.

AN ACT for the benefit of the Washington Hebrew Congregation in the City of Washington.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED. That all the rights, privileges and immunities heretofore granted by law to the Christian churches in the City of Washington be, and the same hereby are extended to the Hebrew Congregation of said City, and that the third section of the Act

approved the seventeenth of June, eighteen hundred and forty-four, entitled "An act concerning conveyances or devises of places of worship in the District of Columbia," shall be so construed as to allow the members of the Hebrew Congregation from time to time, by a vote of two-thirds to elect their own trustees, and the same by a like vote to displace at pleasure; which said trustees shall, during their continuance in office, have the same title in and power over any lot or tract of land, as if held by them under the act aforesaid for a Christian church; PROVIDED That any and all legal and equitable rights, demands, or liabilities of the said Hebrew Congregation, acquired or assumed by or through said trustees, shall be limited to the trust property of said congregation held by said trustees.

NATHANIEL P. BANKS,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.
December 3rd, 1855.

JESSIE D. BRIGHT,
President of the Senate, PRO TEMPORE.
June 2nd, 1856.

Approved in duplicate and signed by—

FRANKLIN PIERCE,
President of the United States.

While about sixty names are on the congregation's books at the charter-season, it is clear

enough that no more than forty were full members, while the others were enrolled because they were seat-holders or purchasers of Kosher meat, to be had only through the authority of the Board. We can add then, to the original twenty-one the following members; L. Seldner, H. King, Jr., M. Lully, Braun, I. Herzberg, A. Rice (Reiss), I. Kish, S. Heller, N. Kaufman, S. King, Litten, Joseph Joseph, Leon Block, H. Hexter, William Wolf, S. Herman, B. Kaufman, H. Mela and Jonas P. Levy. The following appear as having either joined a year or two afterwards or were contributing members; S. Samstag, M. Samstag, N. Greenbaum, D. E. Young, Strauss, Goldsmith, Frank, Baer, Levy Bar, H. Weil, H. Heineman, I. Strouse, Hecht, Lieblich, Bloch, Jos. H. Hanlein, Roewald, Foulder, Wogel, Waterman, M. Oppenheimer, Ledderman, E. Kaufman, I. Stein, J. Hildesheimer and M. Seigel. Most of them were young Germans from Bavaria, Hessen and Baden, bringing with them the Sulzbach ritual and transplanting their strong orthodoxy amid the new environments. A Mr. Seldner was elected Chazan in 1855 and then H. Mela, and the serv-

ices were held on Fourth Street opposite the City Hall, for a year and a half, and then transferred to S. E. corner Ninth and D. The members taxed themselves one dollar a month for dues and extra for the Schochet and, by selling the privilege of Kosher meat, created thereby enough revenue for the Chazan so as to keep the membership expense as low as possible. An incident is told which thoroughly photographs the sentiments and the life of the period. In March, 1855, the late William Wolf and his prospective brother-in-law, Mr. N. Kaufman, invited Mr. W. Jacobi to officiate at the former's marriage ceremony to the wounded feelings of Mr. S. Herman, then acting Chazan. For this breach of professional discourtesy, Mr. Niem Kaufman was refused Kosher meat as a punishment.

In the Fall of 1857, Rev. S. M. Lansburgh accepted the local leadership. He came well recommended from a year's service in Baltimore and as the author of a "System der Mathematischen und Theologischen Chronologie oder Zeitkunde von 1741-1900." It is written in German and represents a creditable amount of work and accurate astronomical and historical knowledge.

The first revised constitution written in 1857 was signed by forty-four members, showing that for two years the membership was stationary. An incident which has grown in interest concerns itself with national events of this period and is related to the local congregation merely because of its being situated in this District. Because of the slavery agitation when party spirit ran high and furious, and party lines were most sharply defined, a deadlock lasting two months prevented the election of a Speaker of the House of Representatives. In desperation, or with the thought that prayer availeth yet in Israel, the Speaker then approached the president of this congregation immediately after the Sabbath morning services, asking if he would not permit the congregation's minister to offer prayer. Owing to Mr. Lansburgh's lack of fluency in English, Mr. A. S. Solomons secured the services of the Rev. Dr. Raphall of New York who, appearing in dignified mien with becoming Tallith and cap, inspired the confidence of all the law-makers present. His simple prayer for wisdom and harmony was followed immediately by the breaking of the deadlock and the successful election

of a Speaker. In this connection we might add somewhat anticipatory that the privilege of opening the House or the Senate with prayer has been granted visiting Rabbis from time to time, such as Drs. I. M. Wise, D. Philipson, J. L. Levy, Edward N. Calisch and Joseph Silverman, but the present Washington ministry has not been overlooked, inasmuch as Rev. Louis Stern had the honor of offering prayer in the House and Rabbi Simon was accorded the courtesy in both Senate and House in 1904.

Nothing of any special interest marks the history of the little congregation until a rupture occurs in 1859. We need not hide the truth that decorum at the meetings and at the services was a great desideratum, and that the very mildest disagreements became magnified into opportunities for dissension. Very often their private business cares entered into congregational discussion and seemed, so they thought, fundamental to the synagog's stability. At any rate, the secession that was already in the air as a national issue, became in this congregation an immediate reality. I have not yet been able to discover the weighty causes or probable occasions for

such a breach. It is not altogether a piece of spite work on the part of some dissatisfied members against the Rev. Mr. Lansburgh, nor is it probable that the latter attempted to impose any Reform ideas upon them (though in Dr. Rose-nau's History of Congregation Oheb Shalom, page 19, Mr. Lansburgh's suggestions of omitting "Shir Hayichud" marked the first step in that congregation's ritual reform.) Whatever was basic to this division, it is clear that the leading spirits of the seceding Chebra, Messrs. Ben Kaufman, S. Heller and Jonas Gluck formed an independent "Shul," held services at Ninth and the Market Place, near the commission stores; elected a Rev. S. Weil as their Chazan and bought a piece of ground on Seventh Street above the boundary as a burial spot.

After the lapse of some months, each congregation realized that separation was suicidal and that its strength, its very life and future lay in co-operation. A union was thus effected on condition that the withdrawing congregation might bring Mr. Weil as Chazan of the united congregation. Mr. Lansburgh yielded to the logic of the situation most gracefully, and shortly there-

after went to his eternal reward in Baltimore. Taking as his text the words of Deuteronomy XX, 6, "And what man is there who hath planted a vineyard and hath not redeemed it? Let him go and return to his home!", Rabbi Szold preached thereon a soulful and impressive funeral address over this departed worker in the vineyard of the Lord.

An incident can be told in this connection. This Congregation worshiping at Finkman's Hall (near the Engine House), rejoiced in the possession of a new Scroll and the distinguished honor of holding it on this especial day of celebration fell to the happy lot of the Hon. Judah P. Benjamin, then United States Senator from Louisiana.

Rev. Weil's ministry showed many indications of congregational progress along all the lines of religious, educational and numerical activity. It is true one hears a great deal about "Shnoder-gelt, Schochet-gelt, Z'doko tatsil mimmoves gelt," fines for non-payment of dues and for failure to attend "Minyan" yet it must be stated that real and substantial progress was made in the years from 1861 to 1867. It is recorded how the congregation, keeping itself in touch with

national issues, joined its sister congregations in observing January 4, 1861 as a fast day while the slavery question overshadowed all problems and issues with its leadening and deadening clouds of despair and imminent destruction.

One of the most significant meetings of the congregation was held in January of 1861 and a new constitution signed by one hundred and one members, enacting among other things, the following special points, was accepted;

(a) The adoption of the Roedelheim Prayer Book was in itself a significant move in the right direction towards a dignified and appreciable service. The ritual changes included the excision of unnecessary Selichoth, the reading of the Mishe berach for the congregation in German and the rendition of the blessing for the government in the English language. Prayers shall be read "in plain and solemn style according to the Minhag America."

(b) The institution of a choir belongs to this period of development. Rev. Weil was authorized to purchase some music in Baltimore. Mr. I. L. Blout who joined the congregation at this time became the leader and organizer of the new

choir and was its inspiring force for many years thereafter.

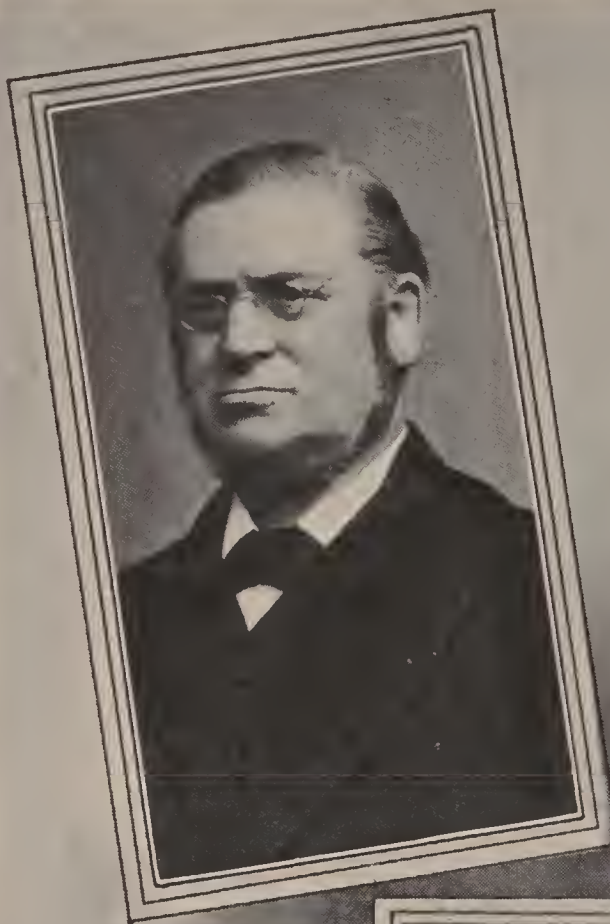
(c) The creation of a school as part of the congregation's activities became a fact in October, 1861. Though at first the school taught secular branches such as English, Arithmetic and German, in addition to the religious studies, it was not long before it became a religious school only and, years after, was placed under the supervision of a special school board. In its first years, sessions were held from 9 a. m. to noon, and from 1 p. m. to 4 p. m., teaching three hours German and Hebrew in the morning while the afternoon was devoted to English and kindred subjects. Members paid one dollar a month for each child, one dollar and a half was the tax for non-members' children. In April of 1865 there were sixty-four members' children in the school and eleven of non-members'. Dr. Hochheimer of Baltimore agreed to examine the classes every three months.

(d) Section three provides for the election of a competent Lecturer and Preacher as the congregation up to that time and for three decades thereafter simply elected one as Chazan, Reader

and Teacher. Article eight calls for the formal installation of the president on "Simchath Torah."

The Civil War brought many Jewish soldiers here. In 1862 a special service on the holidays was held in Alexandria for them by Mr. Moritz Fischer. It is related that a Jewish officer in full uniform, desiring to attend the Yom Kippur services in this city, held in Finkman Hall, refused at first to enter, as the sight of men and women worshiping together on the same floor was offensive to his orthodox sentiment. When told that economy and the absence of galleries compelled them to seat the men in the front and the women to the rear, his conscience and religious sensibilities were appeased.

The numerical growth of the congregation and the unsatisfactory quarters at the corner of Ninth and D Streets compelled the possession of a permanent home. After canvassing in neighboring cities, sufficient money was secured to purchase the South Methodist Church on the west side of Eighth Street between H and I, which was being temporarily utilized as a governmental hospital and for which the congregation was re-imbursed



DR. HERMAN BAAR.

REV. S. WEIL.

REV. S. M. LANSBURGH.

\$320 damages. It was a joyous day in this little community when in the Spring of 1863 they moved into their new home dedicated by the Rev. Dr. Isaac Leeser of Philadelphia. They determined to call themselves "Shaare Zedek Congregation," though this name was never used after its announcement. Dr. I. M. Wise preached during the same year here and in 1865 Dr. Leeser was asked to deliver a special memorial sermon in April on the death of Abraham Lincoln.

The Civil War wrought havoc in the congregation, which was reduced to a membership of seventy-seven. Rev. Weil left and was succeeded in January of 1867 by Rev. I. S. Jacobson, and he in 1869 by Dr. Herman Baar. The last named had suffered some severe throat affection while crossing the ocean from Liverpool, England, and remained here but a short while to make himself more useful and forever happily remembered as the "Father of the Orphan." Rev. Isaac Stemple followed in August, 1870, having served gratis for some time. We reach a period of ferment. The congregation is divided on religious questions. Generally speaking the members have always been

conservative and have possessed a "Baltimore Judaism" largely due to the influence of Rev. Dr. Szold upon the many young men and women who came hither from Baltimore. But deeper still was a current growing in force and volume; not so numerically strong, these younger men craved for a more progressive interpretation of Judaism and its rites of belief and of practice. Reform was in the air and the congregation felt its bracing and stimulating effect. Changes such as the abolition of "Kiddush" in the synagogue, of the Chazan's facing the Holy of Holies, of the wearing of the funeral praying-shroud, of the calling up of "Levi, Cohen and Israelite" were accepted without a wrench of soul; the motion to sing the hymns in English, to recite aloud the "Shemone Esre" was readily concurred in, but the gift of a melodeon by Henry Adler in behalf of himself, L. Baar, I. Herzberg, Philip Wallach and Henry Blout, though accepted by the Board, stirred in the congregation a whirlwind of excitement and opposition. To many the leap seemed too sudden and too great. Thus it happened that in 1870 about thirty five members left the parent body and organized an independent



THE OLD TEMPLE. 1863—1897.

congregation which has since remained true to orthodoxy. The Washington Hebrew Congregation shook but did not totter. The secession was a blessing in disguise. It brought unity, harmony and an intensification of the religious consciousness. A growth in decency and decorum followed. The lopped off and dried branches gave opportunity as days rolled on for a freer flow of vitalizing sap. The roots were sunk deeper in the soil. The congregation was now committed to Reform and Historical Judaism and it has consistently kept to that standard of a happy and rational medium. A reclassified pew system became necessary and the remaining members, left to shoulder the responsibility, were drawn more closely together and, with unity of purpose and principle, moved on under the newer religious inspiration from strength to strength.

The following year was filled by Rev. Michael Goldberg and, outside of the persistent rumor and desire for another prayer-book, we must note his institution for the first time of the confirmation ceremony. The first class consisted of these girls, Hannah Fischer (Mrs. Eli Sickler), Bertha Herman (Mrs. D. Strauss),

Rebecca Buchbinder, Hannah Nachman (Mrs. M. Clark) Clara Siegel (Mrs. J. Sondheimer), Marie Kaufman (Mrs. A. Heyn).

II.

The second period of the congregation's history is marked and dominated entirely by the first twenty-five years of the ministry of Rev. Louis Stern. The advent of this new leader in July of 1872 found the congregation struggling mightily under the heavy burden of self-maintenance. Some of the Board thought seriously of disbanding. Braver hearts rose equal to the emergency. The question of meeting growing expenses was answered by the common-sense device of economy. The choir-account was reduced and the membership dues raised uniformly to three dollars a month, thus creating additional revenue to what an increased membership might bring. The future promised well and, under these most favoring conditions, the ministry of Dr. Stern began a steady and successful forward movement. Dignity marked the new devotional exercises; the inspiring strains of lofty and of distinctively Jewish music lent wings to the soul; the introduction of the Jastrow-Szold ritual in



REV. LOUIS STERN.

1873, met the growing needs of the enlightened and American form of worship. The Temple was rebuilt in 1877 and again in 1888 at which latter date the dedication sermon was preached by Dr. Szold on the 16th of April. By this time the membership had climbed to one hundred and sixty one. The question of worshiping without hats was lost by a vote of 25 to 8; it was debated again in 1884 with the same negative result and it was not until 1890 that the persistency of the movement for a thorough-going and consistent reform was finally successful.

Scarcely had another decade rolled by when the desire and the demand for larger and more commodious quarters in keeping with the dignity of the first Jewish congregation in the Nation's capital gathered strength. Though as early as 1893, Mr. Henry King Jr. reported as to its wisdom, it was not until the Spring of 1897 that the president's enthusiasm and courage won the day against all discouragement and defeat. Majority and minority reports crossed each other. At last with the money accruing from a Fair and the hearty support of The Young People's Temple Society and with the liberal subscriptions of

members and of friends, the solid foundation of the New Temple was laid on September 15th, 1897, amid song, praise and impressive ceremonial. The character and the joy of the occasion was heightened by the distinguished presence of President McKinley and his Cabinet, a prized privilege secured through the efforts of Hon. Simon Wolf. Nor was the joy unalloyed; the moving spirit of the building-president was absent. On August 15th, Mr. Henry King was translated to the Temple on high, not built of human hands. Yet the fine marble slab in the vestibule testifies to the congregation's love, and the very Temple itself is monumental of his sacrifice, service and loyalty to the cause of Judaism and to his congregation. Fortunately a most worthy successor was found in Mr. I. L. Blout who had been in the service of the congregation since 1862 in every capacity and who, taking up the work, carried the Temple-project to its successful and stately completion and dedication on September 9th, 1898.

The New Temple stands upon the same grounds of the older ones with a heightened dignity and an impressive grandeur, a splendid



HENRY KING, JR.,
The Father of the New Temple.

symbol of, and a glorious testimonial to, the denial, sacrifice, energy, idealism and religious fervor of the congregation. And while praise is due to so many earnest and enthusiastic men and women, yet it must be allowed that the real burden of the work and criticism and fault-finding was borne by the building committee, headed by Mr. William Hahn (whose faithful services as chairman were appreciatively indicated by the receipt of a handsome loving cup) with the following gentlemen: I. L. Blout, S. Bieber, Amnon Behrend, Meyer Loeb, Max Kaufman, J. Sondheimer and Leopold Luchs. It is interesting to note something which has been overlooked; in the report of Mr. Hahn to the Congregation he advocated the beautification of the Temple by Memorial Windows and the necessity for the creation of a Ladies Auxiliary Society on the plans adopted in neighboring cities where the work is directed exclusively to the interests and advancement of congregational and useful activities. These two recommendations still await our realization.

The Fall holyday-season came with an unwonted zest. The fond dreams of the members

were realized. The dedication of the Temple with sublime services for two days surpassed the wildest anticipations of even the most enthusiastic. With swelling strains of praise and on wings of heaven-born music the souls of all present were lifted upward in joy and gratitude. The delivery of the key by Miss Ray Hahn, the presentation of the building formally by her father, the acceptance thereof by Mr. Blout, the lighting of the Perpetual Light by Past President Gusdorf, the oration by Dr. Henry Berkowitz of Philadelphia, the address of Hon. Simon Wolf, the sermon of Dr. Abram S. Isaacs of New York and the discourse of Dr. Stern, interspersed throughout with musical selections, united to send forth and upward a glorious harmony of praise to God and of undying inspiration to His humble worshipers. Truly indeed could the minister have said "I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

Twenty six years were now crowned with the wreath of loyal service; in the preceding year the twenty fifth anniversary of his local ministry received a hearty and substantial vote of his congregation's love and devotion for him. The



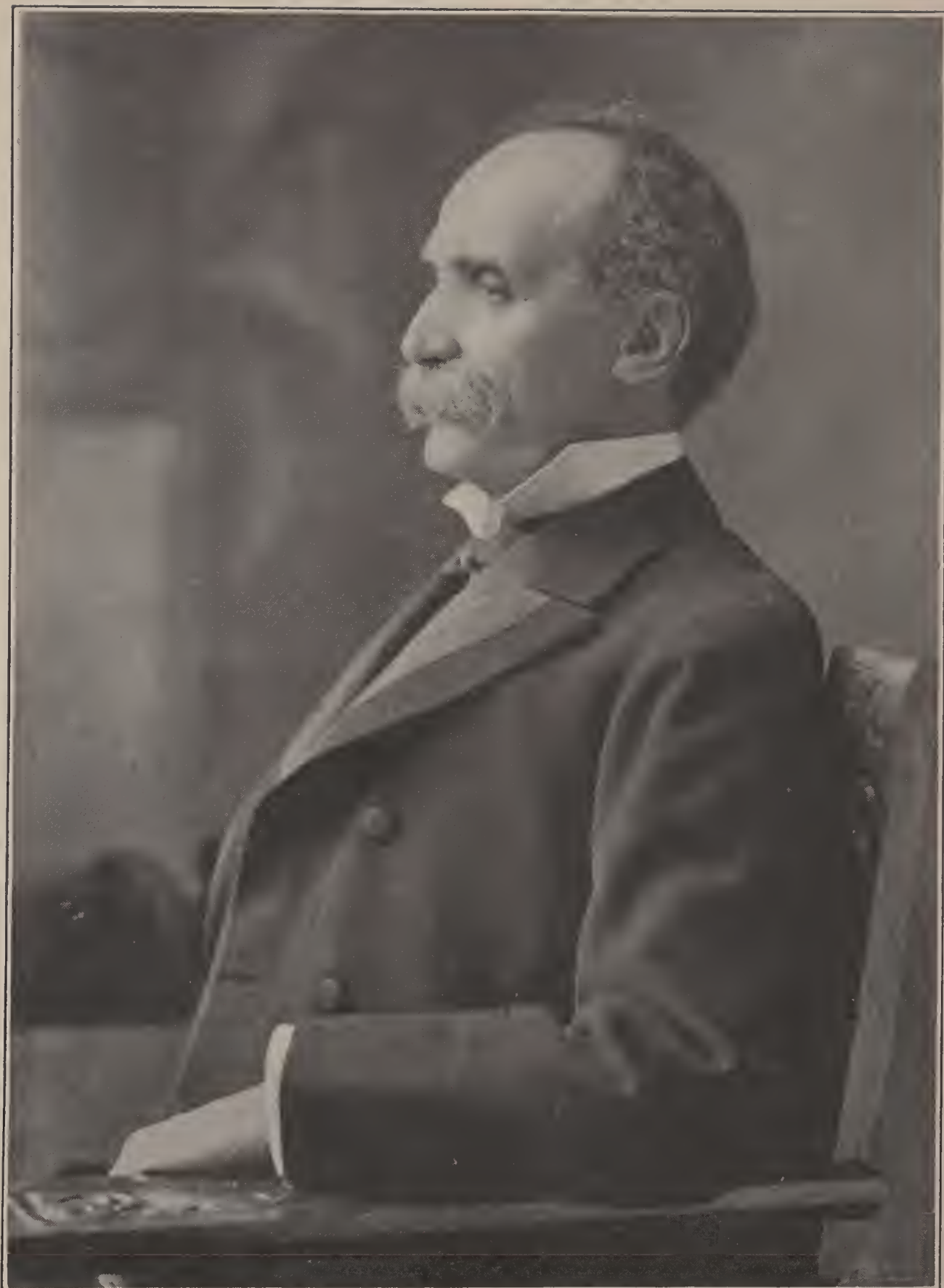
THE NEW TEMPLE.

new Temple started forth, full panoplied for further achievement and victory. Its membership had reached the two hundred and twentieth mark; the Union Prayer Book had been adopted the year before; the courageous stand of the minister solved forever the wearing of the hat and gown, whether on the part of the pulpit or of the pew, and thus closed the second period of the Washington Hebrew Congregation's onward movement.

A word of appreciation ought to be here recorded. During all these many years the congregation has enjoyed the unstinted efforts of some of its members who especially on Rosh Hashona and Yom Kippur volunteered their services; I refer especially to Messrs. Gotthelf, B. Gusdorf, S. Herman, S. Goodman, B. Nordlinger, C. Brez, I. L. Blout, and, to be sure, to Hon. Simon Wolf, whose address on Yom Kippur morning for twenty years was always looked forward to with especial interest. It is eminently proper to add that the unselfish and volunteer services of the many Sabbath School Teachers and of the members of the Choral Society should here find at least this passing word of appreciation.

Here, too, a word ought to be allowed to record the names of at least seven gentlemen whose membership stretches back over forty years. Messrs. B. Gusdorf, L. Rosenberg, Simon Wolf and I. L. Blout are all past presidents and still in active membership. Messrs. Wm. Wolf and Moses Cohen were both past-vice-presidents and have but recently gone to their eternal rest. Moses Cohen's eminent services as sexton for twenty three years is largely accountable for the rapid increase in membership.

The congregation has no auxiliary institutions. The Webster Literary Society and the Young Men's Hebrew Association were strong and helpful in their days, but neither was a distinctly congregational affair. The building of the new Temple gave birth to the only direct descendant of the congregation and that was the Young People's Temple Society, formed one Friday night in 1897 after the services were over; it soon grew lusty, strong and useful. Under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Wolf it became a most admirable adjunct to the Temple and, in addition to the magnificent, financial support, it met the literary and social demands of a vast membership. It, too, has since



HON. SIMON WOLF,
Chairman of Board of Delegates of U. A. H. C.

passed out of existence. Yet it must be allowed that the Temple's inspiration has helped to bring to life and usefulness many an organization now thriving and many a one since forgotten.

While thus recounting the efforts of men to answer the religious and ethical demands of the living, we must speak briefly of their worthy and tender regard for those who have joined the silent majority. Respect for the departed is native to the Jewish soul. In nearly every pioneer community the death of one of their number creates the necessity for an institution or organization with the proper care of the dead as one of its worthiest aims; in this wise many a congregation was born. It is definitely known that before 1850 a few Jews were taken to Baltimore for burial; but the death of Mr. Meimberg in Georgetown led the little pioneer group to secure some suitable burying spot. It was then that a little ground was bought along the Hamilton Road through the efforts of Joseph Friedenwald (now in Baltimore,) and of Moritz Fischer. The seceding Chebra in 1859 chose a separate place on Seventh Street above U and in their merging with the parent-body readily disposed of it.

When thus united, special efforts secured for them added ground. In 1879 three acres were bought and the family lot system successfully inaugurated through the insistance of Mr. Henry Franc. The name of "Machpelah" was given to it. In 1890 four more acres were bought; the ground was handsomely laid out, new walks, stable and toilet accomodations were added, a fine stone bridge was made to span the declivity so as to reach with ease the newer and elevated ground, and two years later a commodious mortuary chapel was erected. Thanks to the special labors of H. Franc and Louis Abrahams the committees of former times and to the untiring services of Ben Salomon, chairman, I. L. Blout, A. M. Fishel, Jacob Eisenmann and J. Jacobi of more recent days, we can with justice and pride point to a peaceful and beautiful cemetery, the complete property of the congregation and one possessing every possible comfort and accomodation. The annual Memorial Services held on the grounds or, during inclement weather, in the chapel, have now become a permanent feature of our religious life.



RABBI ABRAM SIMON.

III.

The recent and third period of the congregation's history is still fresh in the minds of the people and a few lines can tell its entire story. The year 1903 witnesses thirty years of service on the part of Dr. Stern and his deserved reelection for five more years as minister. In the April meeting of 1903, the president was authorized to appoint a committee of five looking to the advisability of engaging a Rabbi. Though the matter hung fire for some time and selfish stones were thrown in the path of what was considered a perfectly logical and progressive movement, the committee reported finally of having received an affirmative reply from Rabbi Abram Simon, of Temple Israel of Omaha, Nebraska. At the installation on February 5th 1904, Rabbi Simon's discourse on the "The Valley of Dry Bones," the strong induction sermon of Rev. Dr. Rosenau, of Baltimore, and the fellowship addresses of Rev. Louis Stern and Mr. Simon Wolf lent to the occasion dignity, solemnity and the happy auguries of congregational advancement.

The building of satisfactory fire-escapes entailing an expense of \$1600 was at once under-

taken. The inadequacy of the Temple to meet the growing demand for more of the desirable pews became at once apparent and led to the appointment of a building committee to devise ways and means looking to the enlargement and enhancement of the present structure. The selection of Mr. Jacob Eisenmann as chairman was a particularly fortunate choice as the result proved conclusively; associated with him were, Messrs. William Hahn, J. Sondheimer, Ben Salomon and Max Fischer. The \$11000 netted from a Fair given in February 1905 enabled the committee to remove the two small rooms on either side of the pulpit, replace them by thirty two new pews, add two study rooms, tint all the rooms of the Sabbath School vestry, decorate and fresco the entire auditorium in a simple, artistic and inspiring manner and, besides, to reduce the mortgage by \$4600. It is agreed that our Temple is as inviting and as appealing to the aesthetic and religious sensibilities and emotions of the worshipers as any in this District of splendidly appointed houses of worship.

The Jubilee thus finds the congregation in a mood for rejoicing. Three hundred and fifty strong,



SUCCOTH 1905,—3666 A. M.

we have the proud consciousness that the Temple is not a handsome sepulchre, but that it is truly alive with happy and devout worshipers, grateful for the past and the present, and rejoicing in the larger opportunities before them and in the heavier burdens they feel they can afford to shoulder. The attendance on Friday evenings compares very favorably with the largest Jewish communities in the land, and the Childrens' service on Saturday from 9.30 to 10 A. M. followed by the regular Sabbath morning devotions fall not behind other services elsewhere in the country on the same day. The symbolism of Judaism has been brought back to the people as with zeal and zest they witness the public Seder, the Succah and the Chanukah flames. Two hundred and five children, besides a post-comfirmation class of twelve, are enrolled in the Sabbath School.

The Temple has become a veritable home. No less than eight organizations hold their regular meetings in the vestry and there is scarcely a day when its ample doors are not generously open for some charitable, religious or literary purpose. Thus, under the continued presidency

of Mr. I. L. Blout, whose activities in the charities and congregational life make him well-nigh indispensable, the future looks bright and auspicious.

The story has been all too briefly told. The glory of the pioneer has been especially recounted for he deserves the credit of the pathfinder. Proud, indeed, would that little band of twenty one feel could they today see the fruitage of their sowing and planting. We are fortunately situated in this District. Washington has a right to have a most representative congregation. The Temple has a moral right to leadership in Jewish affairs. Its situation in this capital is a mere matter of accident; it must, however, win and deserve the intellectual and religious vantage-ground by enthusiastic work, by a deepening of its Jewish consciousness, by a wholehearted patriotism and by a wholesome desire and passion to be of service to the larger congregation of Israel. To grow into this wider representative character is the broader outlook of duty which this Jubilee opens out to us. Ye members and friends of The Washington Hebrew Congregation, go forth with courage and faith, with hope and wisdom to gain the promised goal!

Faith spun a hopeful, silken thread
Into the strand of Israel's Task;
A Cable now, five decades fled,
Crips Service in its golden clasp.



ISAAC L. BLOUT,
President.



ADOLPH M. FISHER,
Vice-President.

Officers of the Congregation

President.

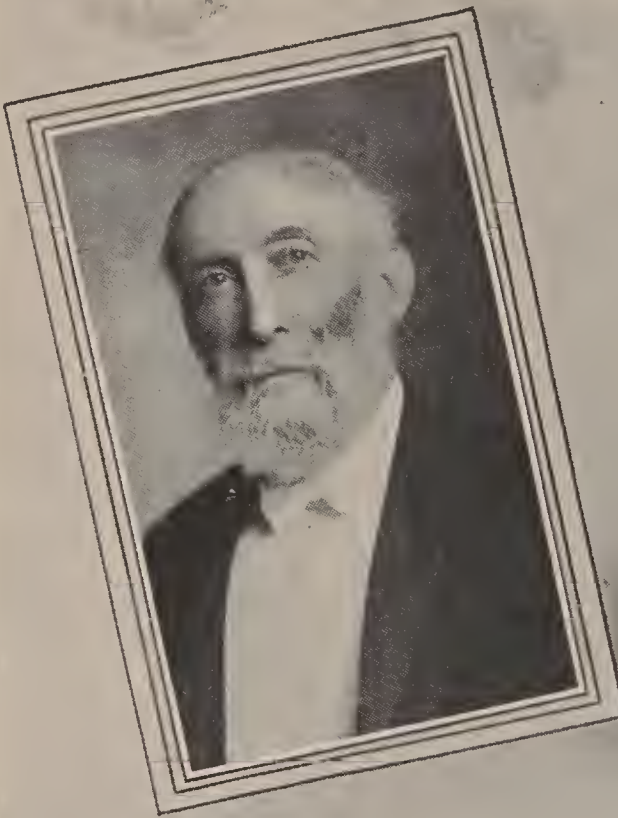
SOLOMON PRIBRAM, 1852-1853—?
HERMAN LISSBERGER, 1853-1854
ISAAC HERZBERG, 1854-1855
JOSEPH FRIEDENWALD, 1855-1857
L. OPPENHEIMER, 1857-1858?
MORITZ FISHER, 1858-1859 ?
LEVY BAR, 1859-1862
ISAAC HERZBERG, 1862-1863
BEN KAUFMAN, 1863-1867
B. GUSDORF, 1867-1869
BEN KAUFMAN, 1869-1870
M. H. PRINCE, 1870-1871
SIMON WOLF, 1871-1873
H. ADLER, 1873-1880
I. L. BLOUT, 1880-1881
C. BAUM, 1881-1882
L. ROSENBERG, 1882-1885
H. KING, JR., 1885-1897
I. L. BLOUT, 1897—

Vice-President.

JACOB SAQUI, 1852——?
SAM KING, 1860-1861
BEN KAUFMAN, 1861-1863
I. BEGGARDT, 1863-1865
MOSES MAY, 1865-1867
WILLIAM WOLF, 1869-1871
B. RAFF, 1871-1873
MOSES COHEN, 1873-1875
I. L. BLOUT, 1879-1880
B. GUSDORF, 1880-1881
S. HELLER 1881-1882
J. P. HERMAN, 1882-1887
PHILIP PEYSER, 1887-1893
M. GOLDSMITH, 1893-1896
PHILIP PEYSER, 1896-1900
WILLIAM WOLF, 1900-1904
Z. STRASSBURGER 1904-1905
A. M. FISHEL, 1905——

Treasurer.

JONAS GLUCK, 1852——?
L. OPPENHEIMER, 1856——?
F. HANLEIN, 1857-1861
I. HERZBERG, 1861-1862
LEVY BAR, 1862-1863
H. ADLER, 1863-1865
LEVY COHEN, 1865-1866
H. LEVY 1866-1867
S. HELLER, 1867
I. HERZBERG, 1867-1870
BEN KAUFMAN, 1870-1881
L. ROSENBERG, 1881-1882
A. KAUFMAN, 1882-1887
A. FISCHER, 1887-1893
D. STRAUSS, 1893-1897
JACOB EISENMANN, 1897-



S. N. MEYER.
MAX FISCHER.

JACOB EISENMANN.
BEN SALOMON.

Recording Secretary.

ALBERT HORWITZ, 1852-1853
W. JACOBI, 1853-1854
SAM HERMAN, 1854-1855
M. SICKLE, 1860-1862
A. ADLER, 1862-1866
M. H. PRINCE, 1866-1867
I. JACOBSON 1867-1870
D. SCHLEIMER, 1870-1872
A. ADLER, 1872-1900
S. N. MEYER, 1900—

Financial Secretary.

J. P. HERMAN, 1862-1866 A. ADLER, 1867-1870
H. L. BLOUT, 1866—? S. N. MEYER, 1870—

Sexton and Collector.

S. H. HANLEIN, 1857—?
CHARLES FREIRICH, 1861-1862
M. OPPENHEIMER, 1862-1870
S. SCHWARTZ, 1870-1881
MOSES COHEN, 1881-1904
L. J. KAUFMAN, 1904—

Reader, Teacher and Rabbi.

JACOBI 1852	S. WEIL, 1860-1867
S. HERMAN, 1854-1855	HERMAN BAAR, 1869
SELDNER, 1855	I. S. JACOBSON, 1869-1870
H. MELA, 1856-1857	ISAAC STEMPEL, 1870-1871
S.M.LANSBURGH, 1857-60	MICHAEL GOLDBERG, 1871-72
LOUIS STERN, 1872—	} In Office
ABRAM SIMON, 1904—	

Officers and Force
Of the Washington Hebrew Congregation,
April, 1904-1905.

President, ISAAC L. BLOUT.

Vice-President, A. M. FISHEL.

Treasurer, JACOB EISENMANN.

Secretary, S. N. MEYER.

Board of Managers.

MEYER COHEN,
ISIDOR GROSNER,
MAURICE ROSENBERG,

MAX FISCHER,
J. JACOBI,
BEN SALOMON,

Trustees.

A. D. PRINCE,

J. HERZOG

E. S. WOOG,

Repair and Building Committee.

A. M. FISHEL, *Chairman.*

Cemetery Committee.

BEN SALOMON, *Chairman.*

Sabbath School Committee.

MAX FISCHER, *Chairman*, DAVID KAHN, *Secretary.*

Faculty.

ABRAM SIMON.
SOPHIE SANGER.
FRIDA LINDHEIMER.
JEANETTE GANSS
ALMA GOODMAN.

LOUIS STERN.
JOHANNA YOUNG.
BERTHA LOWENTHAL.
RECHA SANDERS.
SADIE GOODMAN.

SARAH WEST.

Ministers.

LOUIS STERN.

ABRAM SIMON.

Sexton, L. J. KAUFMAN.

Choir.

DR. G. W. WALTER, *Organist.*

MRS. M. N. MARTIN.
MR. J. H. NOLAN.

MRS. NELLIE SHIR-CLIFFE.
MR. W. D. MAC FARLAND.



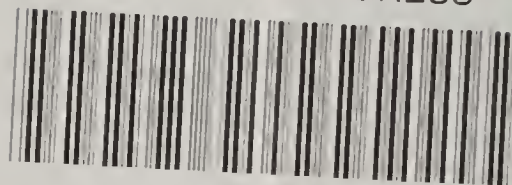
JOSEPH JACOB.
ISIDOR GROSNER.

MAURICE ROSENBERG.
MEYER COHEN.





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